



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

[4910-EX-P]

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2012-0032]

Commercial Driver's License Standards: Application for Exemption; Daimler Trucks North America (Daimler)

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of application for exemption; request for comments.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces that Daimler Trucks North America (Daimler) has requested an exemption for one commercial motor vehicle (CMV) driver from the Federal requirement to hold a commercial driver's license (CDL). Daimler requests the exemption for Dr. Wolfgang Bernhard, head of the Daimler Trucks and Bus Division, who will test drive CMVs for Daimler within the United States. Dr. Bernhard holds a valid German CDL and wants to test drive Daimler vehicles on U.S. roads to better understand product requirements in "real world" environments, and verify results. Daimler believes the requirements for a German CDL ensure that operation under the exemption will likely achieve a level of safety equivalent to or greater than the level that would be obtained in the absence of the exemption.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER.]

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by Federal Docket Management System Number FMCSA-2012-0032 by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: www.regulations.gov. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- Fax: 1-202-493-2251.

- Mail: Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590-0001.
- Hand Delivery or Courier: West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. E.T., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Instructions: All submissions must include the Agency name and docket number. For detailed instructions on submitting comments and additional information on the exemption process, see the Public Participation heading below. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to www.regulations.gov, including any personal information provided. Please see the Privacy Act heading below.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to www.regulations.gov at any time and in the box labeled “SEARCH for” enter FMCSA-2012-0032 and click on the tab labeled “SEARCH.”

Privacy Act: Anyone is able to search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review a Privacy Act notice regarding our public dockets in the January 17, 2008, issue of the **Federal Register** (73 FR 3316).

Public Participation: The Federal eRulemaking Portal is available 24 hours each day, 365 days each year. You can obtain electronic submission and retrieval help and guidelines under the “help” section of the Federal eRulemaking Portal Web site. If you want us to notify you that we received your comments, please include a self-addressed,

stamped envelope or postcard, or print the acknowledgement page that appears after submitting comments online.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Richard Clemente, FMCSA Driver and Carrier Operations Division; Office of Carrier, Driver and Vehicle Safety Standards; Telephone: 202-366-4325. E-mail: MCPSD@dot.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

FMCSA has authority under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315 to grant exemptions from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. FMCSA must publish a notice of each exemption request in the **Federal Register** (49 CFR 381.315(a)). The Agency must provide the public an opportunity to inspect the information relevant to the application, including any safety analyses that have been conducted. The Agency must also provide an opportunity for public comment on the request.

The Agency reviews the safety analyses and the public comments, and determines whether granting the exemption would likely achieve a level of safety equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved by the current regulation (49 CFR 381.305). The decision of the Agency must be published in the **Federal Register** (49 CFR 381.315(b)) with the reason for the grant or denial, and, if granted, the specific person or class of persons receiving the exemption, and the regulatory provision or provisions from which exemption is granted. The notice must also specify the effective period of the exemption (up to 2 years), and explain the terms and conditions of the exemption. The exemption may be renewed (49 CFR 381.300(b)).

Request for Exemption

Daimler has applied for an exemption for the head of its Truck and Bus Division from 49 CFR 383.23, which prescribes licensing requirements for drivers operating CMVs in interstate or intrastate commerce. Dr. Wolfgang Bernhard is unable to obtain a CDL in any of the U.S. States due to his lack of residency in the United States. A copy of the application is in Docket No. FMCSA-2012-0032.

The exemption would allow Dr. Bernhard to operate CMVs in interstate or intrastate commerce to support Daimler field tests designed to meet future vehicle safety and environmental requirements and to promote technological advancements in vehicle safety systems and emissions reductions. Dr. Bernhard needs to drive Daimler vehicles on public roads to better understand “real world” environments in the U.S. market. According to Daimler, Dr. Bernhard will typically drive for no more than 6 hours per day for 2 consecutive days, and that 10 percent of the test driving will be on two-lane state highways, while 90 percent will be on interstate highways. The driving will consist of no more than 200 miles per day, for a total of 400 miles during a two-day period on a quarterly basis. He will in all cases be accompanied by a holder of a U.S. CDL who is familiar with the routes to be traveled.

In the May 12, 2012, **Federal Register** (77 FR 31422), FMCSA granted Daimler a similar exemption for two of its test drivers. Each individual held a valid German CDL but lacked the U.S. residency necessary to obtain a CDL. FMCSA has concluded that the process for obtaining a German CDL is comparable to or as effective as the U.S. CDL requirements and ensures that these drivers will likely achieve a level of safety equivalent to or greater than the level that would be obtained in the absence of the exemption.

Daimler requests that the exemption cover a two-year period. Dr. Bernhard holds a valid German CDL, and as explained by Daimler in its exemption request, the requirements for that license ensure that the same level of safety is met or exceeded as if this driver had a U.S. CDL. Furthermore, according to Daimler, Dr. Bernhard is familiar with the operation of CMVs worldwide.

FMCSA has determined that the process for obtaining a German-issued CDL is comparable to, or as effective as the Federal requirements of 49 CFR Part 383, and adequately assesses a driver's ability to operate CMVs in the United States.

Request for Comments

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(4) and 31136(e), FMCSA requests public comment on Daimler's application for an exemption from the CDL requirements of 49 CFR 383.23. The Agency will consider all comments received by close of business on [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER.**] Comments will be available for examination in the docket at the location listed under the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice.

Dated: June 25, 2014.

Larry W. Minor,
Associate Administrator for Policy.

